



Youbou Community Association

2023 Year in Review January 2024

Mission Statement: We provide a forum to advance the social, safety, environmental and economic interests of the community of Youbou and its residents.

Board: The board met almost every month of the year. Our board is currently comprised of 10 members, with a potential maximum of 11. Our 2023 board has included Julia Martinusen (Chair), Sandra McAfee (Vice Chair), Randall Wilson (Secretary), Steve Watt (Treasurer), Monica Ash, Joelle Bellanger, Patrick Miller, Cheryl Morgan, Debbie Smith, and Joe Tatham.

Calendar of Events

January: We brought back New Years' Eve after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. The Joints aka Eagle Eyes played to a sell-out crowd, which put us back onto solid financial standing after two years of outgoing cash with very little coming in.

February: YCA members met for our Annual General Meeting on February 12 in the afternoon, with a zoom option in the evening. Re-elected were: Julia Martinusen (Chair), Sandra McAfee (Vice Chair), Randall Wilson (Secretary), Steve Watt (Treasurer), Monica Ash, Joelle Bellanger, Cheryl Morgan, Debbie Smith, and Joe Tatham. Long-time board members Eva and Garry Fearon decided not to run for re-election. We thank them for their many years of dedication and commitment to the community and the YCA board. Patrick Miller was elected as a new board member and one position remained open.

Euchre afternoons were initiated on Sunday, February 20, in the hall downstairs, with turnouts between 12 and 20 players.

The YCA conducted a survey to understand if priorities and passions of residents had shifted since the last survey before the pandemic. Top concerns continued to be: traffic and road safety, emergency preparedness, water quality, and public lake access, in that order.

March: Euchre play continued on March 12.

April: An Earth Day planned clean-up of Swordfern access was switched to Lubins Park because Swordfern residents wanted to do their own clean-up. It was rainy, but the crew did haul out a lot of junk.

The YCA joined forces with the Cowichan Lake Trail blazers to field two work days on the Christopher Rock trail. (Julia Martinusen was President of CLTBS and is now Secretary.)

April: Euchre play continued on April 11.

May: The Youbou Community Garage Sale returned on May 6, with publicity, maps, and balloons from the YCA. Over a dozen homeowners participated and treasures were bought and sold.

The YCA hosted the Area I Clean-Up on May 27, so residents could haul up to \$30 of trash to the dump for free. The YCA funded \$949 for Area I residents to dump their trash, out of a budgeted \$1,000.

June: The YCA teamed up with Our Cowichan Communities Health Network to help publicize the upcoming community health survey and received \$500 as support for the initiative.

It was determined the Youbou Elk Statue project championed by Monica Ash could not move forward due to the CVRD not having capacity nor policies for artwork on its lands or parks and MOT not granting maintenance permission to the YCA for the triangle across from the church. Monica reached out to project donors to offer refunds. Many donors declined refunds and requested the funds be donated to the YCA. The YCA received about \$2,000 from this initiative.

July: Our second annual Crabfest was held on July 22. We easily sold all 100 tickets and guests were once again thrilled with the event. Bruce Bunting again provided background music.

Community member Adam Khomsi responded to our appeal to update the YCA web site. Not only did Adam update the site beautifully (and teach Julia how to do minor updates), but he volunteered to host the site, thereby saving the YCA significant ongoing web hosting fees.

August: At the short-staffed CVRD-run Youbou regatta, board members and other YCA volunteers served as judges for the parade and chalk art contest. Julia stepped in as water sports director. The YCA offered the concession. Due to the extra volunteer requirements on board members, the YCA could not decorate a float for the parade.

September: While the YCA had hoped to bring back Octobeerfest on September 30, with the band 1 Hit Away, a scheduling snafu at the CVRD caused a double booking. The YCA graciously ceded the date to the other group planning an event the same night. We hope to host Octobeerfest in 2024, better than ever, with 1 Hit Away playing.

October: Community volunteer Julie Madden organized a Witches paddle on October 14, which attracted over 20 paddlers (kayaks and stand-up paddleboards) and much media attention. The front page newspaper photos were even more dramatic due to the eclipse occurring during the paddle. Garry Fearon volunteered his pontoon boat for safety and photographers.

Throughout the month, volunteers helped to decorate for the Haunted House, with Halloween in full force on October 31, with a preview on Sunday, October 29. The YCA again offered the happy Pumpkin Patch with Ghoul-fish pond for young trick-or-treaters.

November: For the Christmas Craft Fair, the CVRD invited the YCA to offer a breakfast and lunch concession again. It was all hands on deck selling soup and ham-and-egggers, from the kitchen downstairs.

The YCA board members were invited to a tea to thank the generous anonymous donors of a huge generator which can power the entire Youbou Hall during times of power failure. This completes the necessary first step on the journey to making the hall a care and comfort centre for community members during extreme climate events. YCA members were instrumental in procuring this donation.

December: The YCA was again able to host its traditional New Year's Eve bash with The Joints aka Eagle Eyes returning to play favourite Eagles songs and popular dancing tunes to a sellout crowd of 250. The Rides 4 You provided two shuttles and we worked with Country Grocer and the Youbou General Store on food and drink. The 50/50 alone generated over \$700 for the YCA.

Because of the unexpected elk statue funds and the support of our event patrons, the YCA was able to once again donate funds to worthy community causes. We donated \$1,000 to the Cowichan Lake Community Services Holiday Hamper project and \$1,000 to the Cowichan Lake Food Bank, for a total of \$2,000.

We're already looking forward to planning a more normal series of events in 2023!

Ongoing Projects

Emergency Preparedness: A large generator has been installed, donated by an anonymous community benefactor. YCA Board member Joelle Bellanger is ready to start re-energizing our campaign to prepare the community and the hall to serve as a Cooling/Warming Centre should events necessitate. Six Youbou residents have undergone training to become Level 1 ESS responders and one has taken the director training. These volunteers will play a key role in the community being able to open a shelter.

CVRD partnership: We continue to work with Area I Director, Karen Deck, on important issues, such as roads, derelict boats, lakeside trash, and invasive species. We also look forward to working with CVRD staff on the regatta, haunted house, Christmas Craft fair, and other programs in 2024, helping to publicize them and add community inspiration.

Public Lake Access: The clean-up of accesses has proven to be challenging with neighbours not wanting to open up nearby accesses too noticeably. If community members wish to see an access cleared, please notify the YCA about which access and we will try to organize something.

Excessive Boat Noise: The YCA continues to communicate with the Decibel Coalition, a national organization that is committed to establishing and enforcing standards for lakes regarding boat noise. The noise generated by float planes was also raised as a concern by residents this year.

Communications: Our board continues to meet monthly, maintain the Youbou Community Association Facebook page with over 1,200 members and publish a monthly newsletter, which is emailed to over 150 member households, posted on facebook and the web site, plus paper copies posted at the businesses in town. We also update the youbouyca.ca website on a monthly basis and the Mile 77 road sign as needed.

Community leadership

Our board members not only serve on our YCA Board, they participate in leadership roles throughout the Youbou and Lake Cowichan communities:

CVRD Hall Advisory Committee: Julia Martinusen, Joelle Bellanger

CVRD Area Planning Commission: Joelle Bellanger (President), Cheryl Morgan

CVRD Area I Park Planning Commission: Steve Watt (Chair)

Youbou Emergency Shelter and ESS Response: Joelle Bellanger, Cheryl Morgan, Julia Martinusen

Lake Cowichan 50-plus activity Centre: Cheryl Morgan (President)

Cowichan Lake Trail Blazers Society: Julia Martinusen (Secretary)

Cowichan Lake Arts and Culture (CLAC): Sandra McAfee (President)
Retreads Hiking Group: Julia Martinusen (Coordinator)
Area I Director, Second: Joe Tatham

Appreciation

Our thanks go to many community residents who may not be board members, but still continue to contribute in valuable ways. That's what a sense of community is all about.

We also appreciate our Youbou businesses—Daly's Auto Centre, the Youbou Bar & Grill, and the Youbou General Store—for supporting our efforts and serving the community so well. In addition, we note the support of Cassy's Coffee House, which closed its doors in October, for its efforts in serving the community over the past years, and wish Pat and Cassy well in their future endeavours.

Witches Paddle: Julie Madden

Polar Swim: Bonnie Frazer

Euchre: Darrell McDonald

Slow-Pitch: Al Capeling

Area I Director and Second: Karen Deck and Joe Tatham

Youbou Community Church Society

Youbou Volunteer Fire Department

Youbou Community Music Fest

Cowichan Lake Trail Blazers Society

Cowichan Lake Recreation Staff